

# The Times Dispatch

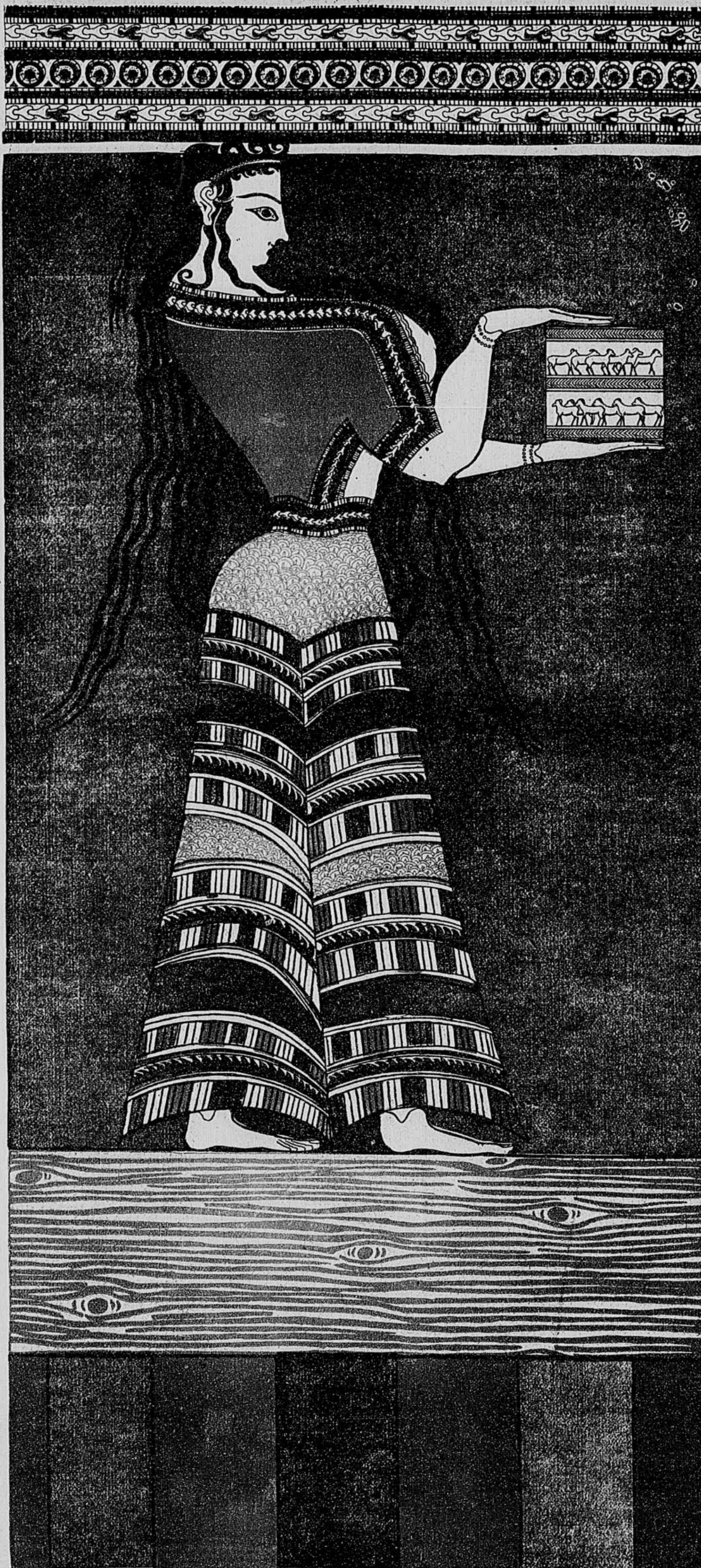
FEATURE SECTION

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## With the Corseted Suffragettes of 3000 Years Ago

Interesting Discoveries in the Ancient City of Hercules which Seem to Prove the Legend of the Greatest Strong Man's Slavery to Lively Queen Omphale only a Memory of Woman's Oldest Conquest of the Ballot



A Woman Leader of Ancient Tiryns

This remarkable wall painting, the first complete picture of a woman of the advanced Cretan civilization of 3000 years ago, has recently been discovered on one of the ruined palace walls of ancient Tiryns. The corset and flounced skirt are astonishingly like our fashions of yesterday. Women ruled in Tiryns, it is

believed, and this ancient lady is seen carrying an offering to the Snake-Goddess, the dominant deity of this vanished civilization. The legend of Hercules and Omphale is thought to be a record of a militant suffragette uprising of the women of the city and also those of old Crete.

**T**HE German society now digging among the ruins of the ancient civilization of Crete has just unearthed evidence of a successful militant suffragette movement at least 1200 years before our era, and probably 2000 years before it. The discoveries which lead the Germans to the conclusion that women on that distant date arose for their rights, and got them, were made at Tiryns, on the Greek mainland. Tiryns, in its heyday, was one of the greatest cities of the Cretans. It has been famous for centuries as the birthplace of Hercules, the greatest strong man and most vigorous demi-god of legend. Tiryns is now, and has been for centuries, a mass of ruins, mostly deep in earth. The sheep of the Greek shepherds have grazed above its palaces and temples for ages.

The conclusions of the scientists throw a strong new light on this legend of Hercules and his city. The famous story of his enslavement by Queen Omphale is only, they say, a fanciful presentation of the important fact that a great woman's suffrage movement which swept over and conquered Crete began and was first successful in Tiryns. The method is one perfectly familiar to all students of legend and mythology.

The Cretan or Minoan language has never yet been read. No Rosetta stone, by which the hieroglyphics of the Egyptians were first deciphered, has been found to give the clue to the Minoan characters. But at Tiryns there was uncovered a mass of wonderful wall paintings, jars and vases and mosaics, most of which bore in pictures the story of this women's uprising and its consequences so plainly that there can be little doubt that the German scientists have read their meaning rightly.

These were not Greeks who built Tiryns and who erected the magnificent palaces now being uncovered. The builders had come from Asia Minor, they were of the same old Minoan race as the Trojans. It was the might of the barbarian Greek city of Argos, a neighbor, which brought about the destruction of the Minoan cities, and with them Tiryns, about, perhaps, 500 B. C. The very ancient Greeks did not hold women in very high regard, and so they felt that it would never do to admit that woman had ever ruled, or there might be danger of the Greek women settling up their "rights" to dominate the State and society. Thus came about the peculiar twist in the Hercules legend which none has been able to explain hitherto.

It has been recognized as a Lydian part of the story, which means that it comes from Asia Minor, and this adds to the value of the new interpretation.

As the story goes, the hero Hercules is entrapped by Queen Omphale, and devotes himself to pleasures, losing himself in the society of women so far as to put on feminine attire, while his lively lady Omphale takes up his lion skin, puts it on, and with the club of Hercules in her hand flaunts herself before the degenerate hero, and proves herself the real hero.

Even though according to the legend Hercules does break forth from his effeminacy at times and vanquishes the Cretes, the goblins who used to waylay travellers and slew Syleus, who compelled all travellers to dig in his vineyard, woman is still the dominating power. Queen Omphale has

him completely at her mercy.

In the astonishing wall paintings at Tiryns the signs of the mastery of the women in all the religious rites first aroused the interest of the scientists. Upon one wall is a whole row of women bearing their offerings to the great patron goddess of the city and the sex—Juno, or Hera, as the Greeks called her. She was symbolized both in Tiryns and in Crete as the great snake-goddess, the patroness of marriage and the ruler of men, for in her hand is always shown the sceptre of dominance. Juno was known in later times even as Juno Regina, the Queen Goddess, a relic of the age in which the primeval woman of the older stock ruled all mankind, and she is always depicted with that prominent chin which betokens power and determination, and the high forehead, expressing great intellectual powers.



An Effigy of the Snake-Goddess of Tiryns, the Ruler of All the Gods.



Queen Omphale Making Hercules Spin Cloth.  
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The Little Pet Dog of a Fashionable Lady of Ancient Tiryns